

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 IO-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3027

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

DAR ES SALAAM 133

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 931

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

DAR FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT AO

SUBJ: ANGOLAN JUNTA BREAKS UP WHITE EXTREMIST PLOT

1. SUMMARY. THE ANGOLAN JUNTA HAS STRUCK AT THE TWO MAIN WHITE EXTREMIST GROUPS IN ANGOLA, THE PCDA AND FRA, ARRESTING SEVERAL LEADERS AND FORCING THE OTHERS TO FLEE OR GO UNDERGROUND. THE JUNTA STILL FEELS WHITES HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO ATTEMPT A COUNTER COUP BUT NOT THE MEANS TO BE SUCCESSFUL. FUA, AS THE REMAINING WHITE PARTY, MAY TURN OUT TO BE THE MAIN BENEFICIARY OF THE MOVES. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE THE ANGOLAN JUNTA HAS BEEN AWARE OF THE EXISTENCE OF RIGHT WING PARAMILITARY GROUPS FOR MANY MONTHS, THE ONLY ACTIONS
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IT TOOK BEFORE OCTOBER WERE ADMONISHMENTS IN THE PRESS, FINES

OF NEWSPAPERS AND VAGUE THREATS OF RETALIATION. THE JUNTA DID NOTHING TO STOP THE PCDA (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY) AND THE FRA (ANGOLAN RESISTANCE FRONT), WHO TOOK THE INDECISIVE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS AND FORGES AHEAD WITH THEIR CLANDESTINE PLANNING, INCLUDING ASKING THE USG FOR ASSISTANCE.

3. A PCDA LEADER WHO SPOKE TO CONGEN OFFICERS IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER MENTIONED THEIR CONNECTION WITH AN EVENTUAL COUNTER COUP IN PORTUGAL, WHICH THEY HOPED WOULD ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR THEM TO TRY A COUP HERE. DR. JOAQUIM FERRONHA, HEAD OF THE PCDA, AND RUY CORREIA FREITAS, A PCDA BACKER WHO PUBLISHED LUANDA'S LEADING DAILY NEWSPAPER, A PROVINCIA, WERE BOTH IN LISBON TO SEE PRES. SPINOLA ON THE WEEKEND OF SPINOLA'S RESIGNATION. THEY BOTH HURRIEDLY RETURNED TO ANGOLA AND DISAPPEARED. THE JUNTA MOVED TO ARREST FERRONHA ON SEPTEMBER 30, PUBLICLY ANNOUNCING HE WAS WANTED FOR QUESTIONING IN CONNECTION WITH THE RIGHT-WING PLOT IN LISBON.

4. THE AUTHORITIES RAIDED PCDA'S LUANDA HEADQUARTERS IN EARLY OCTOBER AND THE SECRETARY OF THE PARTY, ANTONIO NAVARRO, WAS ARRESTED. THE RAID TURNED UP A LIST OF 200 MILITARY MEN WHO HAD JOINED THE PARTY, INFORMATION THAT A COUP WAS BEING PLANNED FOR LATE OCTOBER IN LUANDA, AND THAT ARMS WERE TO BE SMUGGLED INTO LUANDA FROM A FREIGHTER. BASED ON THE EVIDENCE, A ROUND-UP WAS ORDERED OF THOSE IMPLICATED, INCLUDING FREITAS. MANY, LIKE FREITAS, WARNED BY SYMPATHIZERS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY, SUCCEEDED IN FLEEING TO SOUTH AFRICA OR WENT UNDERGROUND. A HIGH COMMAND SPOKESMAN TOLD US THAT ONE OF THE KEYS TO UNRAVELLING THE PLOT WAS INFORMATION FURNISHED BY MILITARY AND PARAMILITARY PERSONNEL WHO HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE PLOTTERS TO JOIN THE COUP. OUR SOURCE ADMITTED THAT MANY COUP LEADERS HAD AVOIDED CAPTURE AND THAT THERE WAS STILL A CHANCE THAT THEY WOULD MAKE AN ATTEMPT. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THEY WOULD FAIL, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS ARE COOPERATING WITH THE JUNTA.

5. ALSO IMPLICATED IN THE COUP WAS THE FRA, A TOTALLY CLANDESTINE NATIONALISTIC WHITE GROUP. THE GOVERNMENT SAYS IT MOVED TO ARREST FRA'S LEADERS, BUT REPORTEDLY ALL OF THEM HAVE THUS FAR ELUDED CAPTURE.

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6. FERNANDO FALCAO, THE WHITE HEAD OF THE ANGOLAN UNITY FRONT (FUA) AND A SENIOR MINISTER IN THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, APPEARS TO HAVE GAINED THE MOST BY THE DEFEAT OF HIS TWO RIVALS (PCDA AND FRA) FOR INFLUENCE AMONG WHITES. THE PCDA IS STILL ALIVE ALTHOUGH DECAPITATED AND NOW HEADED BY A BLACK WITHOUT ANY REAL INFLUENCE, DOUNGALA GARCIA. ITS EXTENSIVE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION WILL EITHER BE ROLLED UP BY THE ARMY AS SUBVERSIVE OR PROBABLY WITHER AWAY WITHOUT THE DRIVING FORCE OF FERRONHA TO DIRECT IT. THERE IS NO

REMAINING LEGAL WHITE PARTY TO COMPETE WITH FALCAO'S FUA FOR FUNDS
OR SUPPORT AMONG THE THIRD OF A MILLION WHITES IN ANGOLA.

7. THE WHITE-LED COUNTER COUP SUFFERED FROM LACK OF EFFECTIVE
ORGANIZATION BUT MORE IMPORTANT WAS THE UNWILLINGNESS OF ANY
ONE GROUP TO RUN THE RISK OF TAKING PRECIPITATE ACTION. EACH HAS
WANTED TO BE SECOND OR THIRD TO ACT, NOT FIRST. IN SPITE OF THE
SMUGGLED ARMS STORY, ARMAMENT IS NOT REALLY A PROBLEM. WHITES HERE
HAVE SUFFICIENT ARMS AVAILABLE (INCLUDING MILITARY TYPES DIS-
TRIBUTED IN 1961-62) TO DOMINATE LUANDA AND ANGOLA SOUTH OF THE
CUANZA RIVER IN THE FACE OF ANYTHING SHORT OF DETERMINED ARMY
RESISTANCE.
KILLORAN

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